

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

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Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*

Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

November 22, 2013

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items Weeks Ending November 22, 2013

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads. **NO REPORT NEXT WEEK AS WE WILL BE ENJOYING THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.**

Airport:

The Airport sold 751.2 gallons of 100LL fuel and 50 gallons of Jet A fuel. The Airport deposited \$1,021 for prepaid customers and deposited \$300.00 for hanger sales. The Airport Authority Board met on November 19. A copy of the proposed Prepay Fuel Policy, which will be considered at the December meeting, is on the Airport [website](#).

Board of Elections:

Now that the Municipal Election is over and certified, the elections staff are busy processing the registrations and changes received since the close of books and filing away all of the paperwork from the election. The Director is out of the office most of the week preparing for her son's wedding on Saturday.

Building Inspections:

The Building Inspections Department issued 75 permits since our last report and has received \$19,353 in permit payments. Inspectors have conducted 283 inspections—including finals on 11 structures/buildings at the Horsehead facility on Hicks Grove Road. In fact, inspectors are attempting finals on their pump station, as well as the 7200 SF control building constructed by Landmark Builders, as of this writing. Kudos to Clint Houser on passing the last of his Level I certifications—Electrical. What a milestone for Clint!!!

Clerk to the Board:

Staff attended the Department Head meeting on the VOIP system on Tuesday.

Commissioners serving as the Airport Authority attended the Airport Authority regular meeting on Tuesday.

The agenda is being prepared for the December 2 meeting using the new Granicus software. This is a very exciting move that will enhance the agenda and coordinate more closely with the webcasting. (see Special Highlights section for board vacancies information)

Cooperative Extension:

The **Director** assisted producers in shipping two tractor trailer loads of Mountain Cattle Alliance calves. The Director continues to assist clients with technical problems through office visits, emails, phone calls, and farm visits. The **Family and Consumer Sciences Agent** attended the WNC Healthy Kids meeting, prepared for statewide listening sessions,

attended a Preschool Health Advisory meeting, and attended training for future EFNEP nutrition program. The **4-H Youth Development Agent** attended the Annual Decorated Pumpkin contest. This contest encourages youth to explore new ideas and use their creativity. The agent attended a 3-day training in Raleigh. Sessions included 4-H Club finances, using technology to serve your clientele, conflict Management, as well as other topics. Pinnacle School's 4-H Animal Club met for the first time on November 7. Twelve new members were in attendance. Their topic for the month was chickens. They learned about chickens, eggs, and even had scrambled eggs for their snack. The **Agricultural Agent** attended a WNC Ag Options Grant meeting, attended a Growers meeting, attended a Rutherford County Farmer's Market Steering Committee meeting, met with Valley Fine Foods, and met with a Farmer's Market Vendor meeting. Contact 89.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. Beginning the week, Mr. Classen attended the Revenue Department update meeting, attended the County Scattered Site Housing Grant Selection Committee meeting, met with Rhonda Owens and Peter Gaulin regarding VOIP, attended the weekly update meeting with Danny Searcy and David Odom, which includes Greyrock and Queens Gap, attended the weekly update with James Kilgo on Solid Waste projects, and attended the weekly Economic Development update meeting. Mr. Classen continued by attending a VOIP Department Head meeting, participated in a conference call with Kerry Giles, Terry Baynard, and Richard Williams, attended a meeting with James Luther, Jason Ruff, and Chris Roach regarding the RPZ Obstruction and attended the Airport meeting. Roger Hollifield and Richard Williams met with the County Manager to discuss the fire safety training facility. Mr. Classen ended the week attending a meeting regarding the Ruth School Adaptive Use Plan, attended a Mental Health Board meeting in Asheville and spent time Friday getting caught up on emails, calls and paperwork.

Economic Development:

This week the Executive Director continued to work closely with company representatives from the recently announced expansion at Trelleborg Coated Systems US, Inc.; prepared an activities update for the Economic Development Commission meeting; met with the County Manager to review activities; attended training for conducting performance evaluations; attended meeting regarding the upgrade of the county-wide phone system; prepared presentation materials for upcoming industrial prospect visits; followed-up with NCSU Institute for Emerging Issues on local project; hosted two industrial prospect site visits; and met with IPDC to review regional economic development initiatives.

This week the Project Administrator met with a Department of Commerce Broadband partner about fiber infrastructure for a business expansion; prepared resolutions to add to the Commissioner's agenda regarding a IDF Infrastructure grant for a business expansion; worked on an IDF Grant application for business expansion; attended Economic Development Advisory Board meeting; attended AdvantageWest Advisory Council to hear updates from NC Commerce – Rural Center Division and NC Ports; held Business Advancement Team monthly meeting and provided and heard updates on efforts over the last year and some strategies about moving forward; attended two business visits with Chris McGraw, NCSU Industrial Extension Services, to provide an introduction to Manufacturing Review and to follow-up on a previously held visit. This week the Economic Development Assistant assisted in assembling information and made preparations to host two industrial prospect visits; attended a meeting regarding the upgrade of the county-wide phone system; attended and took minutes at the monthly Economic Development board meeting; and continued to make preparations for the upcoming Duke Site Readiness presentation.

Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

The Fire Marshal conducted three origin and cause investigations, responded to several fires last week to provide manpower, prepared information for regional grant request for 800MHz radio equipment, attended deed conveyance from Horsehead Metal Products to Cliffside Area Volunteer Fire Department for property where a new fire substation will be constructed, and completed tour of elementary schools with the fire safety house.

Finance:

The Finance Office is working closely with departments and vendors to update vendor files with E-Verify data as required by new legislation. The audit is near completion. The Director and Assistant Director attended the VOIP meeting.

Human Resources:

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Welcome new employees Susan Toney (Senior Center), Lindsay Sisk (911), and Rob Ives (Sheriff). Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Caroline Petty (DSS). The Director along with Jason Ruff conducted interviews for the building inspection vacancy. The Director held a training for performance evaluations, attended the HR Association meeting, and held interviews for convenience center attendants along with James Kilgo and Terry James. The Director also held interviews for the vacant IT positions with Rhonda Owens.

Information Technology:

The IT Department has been working hard to get the implementation of the VOIP ready to go. Interviews are scheduled for the two vacant positions. Thank you for all the hard work of the IT staff, as they have teamed together to make sure all duties were completed while the process of filling the vacancies took place.

Library:

We are now advertising to patrons the ability to have email notices sent to them for the arrived holds and overdues. From the Mountains Branch: On Wednesday, 18 people attended a fascinating talk about wild turkeys at Mountains Library. The special program *Talking Turkey* was presented by Chimney Rock Ranger S. Tillotson. On Thursday, the Lake Lure Lions club held free diabetes screenings at Mountains Library and on Saturday, 68 people were in attendance for this year's Friends of the Mountains Branch Library annual meeting. The Lake Lure Cloggers and Naturalist Storyteller, Doug Elliot entertained the crowd over lunch. Story Time and Outreach children at Spindale Elementary School have been learning about Scarecrows this week, with next week's topic of Thanksgiving. The Children's Librarian also taught an Early Childhood Education class at Isothermal Community College on "How to Prepare and Implement Effective Story Times." The Director along with other staff attended the monthly CMC meeting.

Public Works/Planning:

The garage had 14 preventative maintenance service calls, 22 repairs, 6 tire service calls and 7 other repairs. Maintenance completed 25 work orders and repairs along with preventative maintenance, and fall pruning and groundskeeping of all County facilities and grounds. The Project Manager spent this week in a training class at Chapel Hill. The Director participated in the evaluation refresher training and the Department head meeting focused on VoIP and vehicle accident awareness. Carl and I have developed a new procedure when vehicle accidents occur that ensures the department head's awareness and follow up to resolve how future accidents can be avoided. The planning commission chose not to meet for November due to no new business. However, updates were provided via email on Queens Gap and Greyrock projects.

Greyrock

The Project 3B retaining wall is being installed now. It should be completed by the end of the week and Project 3B will be completed and ready for paving. Project 8 has been graded to about 1000 feet from the end. That project should be completed within 2-3 weeks. Project 9 is complete. Project 4 Paving is completed. Part of Project 7, 8 and 9 paving contracts are being signed. I anticipate this paving and Project 3B paving will be completed within the next few weeks. Project 10 and Project 11 bids will be opened prior to Christmas. Project 12 will be open in February and will be the final grading project.

Queens Gap Updates: Project 1 contractor is mobilizing this week and beginning work. Project 2 bid opening will need to be rebid due to the low bidder failing to advertise in the Daily Courier as required by the bid documents. New bid opening is November 27th. Water system design is nearly complete. Water bids will be opened in early February of 2014. We held a meeting with BRWA today to confirm final design and made great progress. Bid package is being prepared for Project 3. Project 4 & 5 plans are underway.

Register of Deeds:

This week, the Register of Deeds office had an active week with 409 recordings and collected \$19,438.00.

The Revenue Department answered 465 phone calls, and assisted 241 citizens who came in to the office (6 being PUV). 49 deeds were recorded and 77 were transferred. 0 estates were transferred and 39 new accounts were set up. Mapping completed 6 splits, 4 merge, 1 acreage adjustments and created 6 new maps and 0 new layers. 6 new E911 addressees were assigned and 1 new road's were created. Ownership of 58 addressees was updated. 7 new road signs were installed,

and 8 new signs were ordered. The GIS website had 150,494 hits and 88,206 successful searches. Appraisers completed 81 field reviews and 91 building permits. Electronic payments consisted of 60 by credit/debit, 61 by website, and 16 by phone. 538 citizens came in to pay at the counter. Enforced collection action consisted of 0 Debt Setoff, 47 garnishments, 2 attachments, and 0 foreclosures. 23 Deeds were certified. Staff worked 10 overpayments, 139 bank drafts, 0 prepaids, 116 bankruptcy payments/issues, 4 debt setoff, 7 discoveries, 49 releases, and 8 refunds. 758 pieces of mail were received and processed. 5873 August motor vehicles renewals were processed and sent to printers. Currently processing the February renewals in the VTS system.

Senior Center:

The Senior Center began the week by wearing purple on Monday in recognition of National Alzheimer's Disease month. Kim Moore, the Program Manager of the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association presented a special program about "Interacting with Someone Who Has Alzheimer's Disease". The Goose Creek Band from the McDowell area performed a variety of bluegrass, gospel and comedy music on Friday. Also, the Medicare Part D Annual Election Period continues until Dec. 7, and SHIP, the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program, can help Medicare beneficiaries compare plans. The Senior Center has SHIP counselors that are available to help. Call for an appointment to talk with our trained SHIP counselors. The main number is 287-6409.

Social Services:

On Tuesday, the weekly case staffing for CPS cases involving mental health and substance abuse issues was held with staff from Smokey Mountain Center and local providers. Also on Tuesday, the Director and Luann Butler attended the Department Head Meeting regarding the new VOIP telephone system. On Wednesday, the DSS Board held their regular monthly meeting with four board members in attendance. In addition to regular agenda items, the Board heard a presentation by Adoption Supervisor, Kathy Kaylor, and Social Worker, Paula Bowen, regarding foster home licensing. IM Administrator, Kandi Bridges and supervisors attended the weekly NC FAST conference call on Wednesday. NC FAST Liaison, Wilbert Morris, was in the office last week to consult with staff and continue our readiness assessment for the Medicaid and Work First roll out. The management team held its regular monthly meeting on Thursday morning. Plans are being finalized and participants selected for the first DSS Leadership Development Program to begin in January 2014. Fifteen participants will be selected for the year long program with meetings once per month for various management trainings and activities, some of which will be held outside the agency. The program will help participants identify, strengthen and build essential leadership skills needed in supervisory and management levels of the agency and make them more effective in their current roles. NC FAST training was conducted by Supervisor, Susan Epley, for clerical staff on Thursday. Management and IT staff met with representatives from Information Inc. on Friday to learn about a foster care payment system. This is a web-based system for managing and tracking foster care board payment requests.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist participated in a teleconference on the District Contract Amendment and a teleconference on Supervisor travel training. Held Farm City Assemblies at 9 county schools with Jeff Bradley to teach a lesson on the importance of agriculture in our everyday life and to announce the Farm City poster contest awards. Continued working on information on Outdoor Environmental Learning Center Grants. The Ag Cost Share Technician met with landowners for 2 Request for Payments and 1 new contract signature. Attended a Farmland Preservation Workshop and an NRCS Conservation Planning Meeting.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 267 customers, hauled 54 from convenience centers, shipped 33 loads to Lenoir, and sent out one recycling trailer. The Director attended a plant tour of Trelleborg, attended the weekly solid waste meeting, attended training for performance evaluations, attended a department head meeting on VOIP, held interviews for convenience center workers and helped Steve Nanney perform education classes to Spindale Elementary students on recycling. Staff has been performing everyday job duties. Staff has started clearing the fences of limbs at the convenience centers. Tony Bumgarner, David Odom, and myself met regarding gas wells to review construction and future plans.

Tourism:

TDA Alliance Conference Luncheon took place Tuesday, November 12th. There were approximately 65 in attendance for the conference. Attendees mingled and visited stations hosted by TDA staff and contracted personnel to get updates on the work that the TDA has done for the past year and a glimpse at plans for the future. Susan Dosier, DK Communications Group, was the guest speaker at the luncheon. If you missed the conference this year makes plans to attend next year's conference in November 2014 (date and time to be announced).

[View the great visitor-based tourism video](#) premiered at the November 12 TDA Alliance Conference.

Transportation Services:

EMS: This week EMS Personnel responded to 126 emergency calls and 66 convalescent calls. Staff members attended a joint meeting with Rescue Squad personnel. A joint statement from both EMS and Rutherford County Rescue was issued to employees and the media. Staff attended a supervisors meeting, as well as, a conference call with the billing company. Ambulance bids were opened for a Type II and Type III ambulance. Bids came in under budget. EMS was notified to be present on Thanksgiving evening for the Facebook Grant announcement. EMS applied for \$15,000 to purchase stair chairs for the ambulances. An agreement was also signed with Walmart this week for the Stuff the Ambulance Toy Drive event. **Transit:** Transit had a banner week by driving 11,591 miles, completed 1,119 local trips and 89 out of county trips, transported 292 unduplicated passengers and collected \$22,088 in revenue. The Director submitted a NCDOT grant application for FY14-15. Transit is asking for \$407,530 in grant funds. The quarterly Transit Advisory Board meeting was held and possible expansion into McDowell County was discussed. Staff attended an online demonstration for mobile tablets to go inside all Transit vehicles. Transit had two accidents this week; however only one was at fault.

Veterans Office:

Over the last two weeks, staff made 314 contacts, received 167 telephone interviews, and had 44 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer continues to help veterans with food from the food pantry. As Christmas fastly approaches, the Veterans Office has the **Toys for Totes Box**. Please help in filling these boxes to give to local children in need at Christmas.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to new grandmother Jackie Wallace of TDA. She has a precious new granddaughter.





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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 4, 2013

CITIZENS TO BENEFIT FROM NEW EMS LIFENET SOFTWARE

Rutherfordton, NC - Rutherford County Emergency Medical Service (RCEMS) is pleased to announce the installation of new LifeNet software. This software will give all RCEMS paramedics the ability to transmit EKG information to an awaiting emergency room physician or cardiologist directly from the ambulance or the patient's home.

Within moments of arrival, Rutherford County paramedics can obtain an EKG on a patient while in their house. That EKG is digitally transmitted to the ambulance outside, where it is then relayed via the LifeNet software to a LifeNet equipped facility. Within seconds, it is simultaneously being viewed by an ER physician and, if need be, cardiologist. This all occurs while the paramedics are still assessing the patient from within the home.

Assistant Medical Director, Drew Harrill touts this improvement. "This software also allows our paramedics to consult with physicians regarding treatment for a patient whose heart rate is too fast, too slow, or abnormal. If a patient is identified as having a heart attack (STEMI) the emergency physician and cardiologist will already be prepared and waiting on the patient's arrival. This shaves vital minutes off of the time it has traditionally taken. Vital minutes that part of the patient's heart is without oxygen."

Early recognition, early notification, and early intervention are essential to the survival of patients experiencing STEMI (Heart Attacks). Via the LifeNet system, RCEMS is linking the field to the hospital care team therefore expediting the system of care. This software will save vital time therefore improving patient outcomes."

"Nationally, there is emphasis on making every second count and utilizing new technology to assist in this endeavor. Essentially, the clock starts once a patient is identified as having a heart-attack (or STEMI) and this technology is yet one more way that RCEMS ensures a patient receives the fastest, most definitive care possible. RCEMS prides itself in utilizing some of the most current technology available, providing medical care according to the most current recommendations, and employing highly-trained EMTs and paramedics. The purchase of this software is a perfect example of that commitment." states EMS Training Officer, Justin Moore, NREMT-P.

Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services has been a county run department since 1973. There are EMS stations in Spindale, Hickory Nut Gorge, Bostic, and the Cliffside Fire Department. EMS runs approximately two hundred calls per week. There are 40 full time medics and approximately 25 part time medics. All ambulances operated by Rutherford County EMS are staffed with one or two EMT-Paramedics. EMT-Paramedic level is the highest level of pre-hospital care available. EMS also provides convalescent transports for non-emergency appointments, inter-facility transports and hospital discharges.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Kerry Giles, Transportation Services Director
828.288.4505, kerry.giles@rutherfordcountync.gov

BOARD VACANCIES

There are several lingering vacancies on boards and commissions to which the County Commissioners appoint members. Please contact Hazel Haynes if you are or know of someone interested in serving on one of these boards.

Industrial Facilities and Pollution Control Financing Authority – 2 members

Airport Appeals Board – 1 member

Home and Community Care Block Grant Committee – 1 member

Historic Preservation Committee – 1 member

Capital Planning and Finance Advisory Committee – 3 members (These members must meet certain criteria. Members whose terms expired were Jim Rhyne representing the Town of Ellenboro, Cameron McHargue representing the Town of Spindale, and Kevin Rogers representing the Health Department.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 25, 2013

EMS AND UNITED WAY TO KICK OFF TOY DRIVE NEXT WEEK

Rutherfordton, NC - Rutherford County Emergency Medical Service (RCEMS) is pleased to announce the "Stuff the Ambulance" Toy Drive. RCEMS will be partnering with several organizations to help provide toys for children in Rutherford County this holiday season. RCEMS will be working with United Way and DSS on every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from November 29 – December 15 to collect toys and stuff the ambulance in the Wal-Mart parking lot. Wal-Mart is partnering on the project as part of their corporate strategy to partner with local non profits to collect toys this Christmas. Hickory Nut Gorge EMS & Rescue will also be collecting toys in the Lake Lure area over this same time period to help aid in this initiative.

Roc-Anthony Smith, a paramedic with the Rutherford County EMS, had the idea for "Stuff the Ambulance". He wanted to give back to the community and many of his fellow medics felt the same way and wanted to get involved. "I think that as EMS providers, we often see people only at the worst times of their lives. With this project, it is a wonderful way for us to change that and bring happiness to the children of our county, who otherwise may not have toys this Christmas. Who doesn't like to see kids smile?" stated paramedic, Roc-Anthony Smith, NREMT-P.

Once the idea started to take shape, RCEMS contacted DSS to see if they could help distribute toys that were collected. "We are very excited about this toy drive and the interest that these county employees have taken to help ensure that children have toys for Christmas. We will definitely be able to distribute them to families with children who are struggling to make ends meet and to children in foster care and kinship care." stated John Carroll, MHDL – Director Rutherford County Department of Social Services.

United Way is also working with the Salvation Army's Christmas Cheer for distribution of toys collected. All toys "stuffed in the ambulance" will stay in Rutherford County. For citizens interested in helping with this initiative, RCEMS and United Way will be in the Wal-Mart parking lot every Friday, Saturday and Sunday starting November 29th. Times are as follows: Fridays: 4-8 PM, Saturdays: 9AM – 5 PM, Sundays: 12-5 PM. Citizens can also drop off toys at the RCEMS station in Spindale off Withrow Road.

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